

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 000010 TOSEC 340179

NODIS

PRETORIA FOR EDMONDSON

FOLLOWING REPEAT LUSAKA 0003 ACTION SECSTATE 1 JAN 77

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 0003

NODIS

FOR SCHAUFLE FROM EDMONDSON AND LOW

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, ZA, RH

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH CHONA

SUMMARY: IN A CONVERSATION WITH EDMONDSON AND LOW, CHONA REPEATED THE ARGUMENTS THE ZAMBIANS HAD MADE TO THE BRITISH IN FAVOR OF A PRIME MINISTER AND AGAINST INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ADVISORY COUNCIL. HE URGED PROVISION FOR A DEPUTY RESIDENT COMMISSIONER TO PROVIDE CONTINUITY AND INSISTED THE ELECTION SHOULD BE HELD AT LEAST THREE MONTHS BEFORE INDEPENDENCE. CHONA CONDEMNED THE NEW
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AFRICAN PARTY BEING FORMED IN RHODESIA AS PUPPETS OF SMITH. END SUMMARY.

1. BEFORE EDMONDSON LEFT FOR PRETORIA HE AND I MET FOR ABOUT AND HOUR WITH MARK CHONA. FOR THE MOST PART, CHONA REPEATED THE ARGUMENTS HE AND KAUNDA HAD MADE TO RICHARD. HE BELIEVES THAT THE NATIONALISTS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO TRY TO

SELECT A PRIME MINISTER. IF THEY FAILED, THEN THEY AND THE FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS SHOULD TRY. ONLY IF BOTH REQUEST IT SHOULD AN ATTEMPT TO PICK A PRIME MINISTER BE ABANDONED. SIMILARLY HE REPEATED KAUNDA'S OPPOSITION TO INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ADVISORY COUNCIL. NOT ONLY DID IT RESEMBLE THE COUNCIL OF STATE BUT IT CREATED ANOTHER FORUM IN WHICH AN ARROGANT SMITH WOULD BE MEETING WITH THE AFRICANS.

2. CHONA RAISED TWO OTHER POINTS: HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT PLACED ON THERE BEING A DEPUTY RESIDENT COMMISSIONER (OR GOVERNOR) SO AS TO ASSURE CONTINUITY IN THE EVENT SOMETHING HAPPENED TO THE COMMISSIONER. SECOND, HE EXPRESSED STRONG OBJECTION TO THE BRITISH IDEA OF HOLDING ELECTIONS ONLY A WEEK OR TWO BEFORE INDEPENDENCE. THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN WOULD INEVITABLY BE A BLOODY ONE AS HAD BEEN THE CASE BEFORE IN RHODESIA. MORE TIME WAS NEEDED TO RECOVER FROM IT AND GET THE GOVERNMENT INSTALLED AND RUNNING BEFORE INDEPENDENCE. CHONA SAID HE THOUGHT A PERIOD OF AT LEAST THREE MONTHS WAS NECESSARY. THE PROCESS OF DRAWING UP A CONSTITUTION COULD BE COMPLETED FAIRLY PROMPTLY (CHONA SAID HE THOUGHT THE BRITISH PROBABLY HAD ONE ALL DRAWN UP ANYWAY) AND THE ELECTION ORGANIZED IN PLENTY OF TIME TO PERMIT INSTALLATION OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT THREE MONTHS BEFORE THE SCHEDULED INDEPENDENCE DATE.

3. CHONA CONDEMNED THE NEW PARTY BEING ORGANIZED INSIDE RHODESIA (ZUPO) AS A CREATION OF SMITH. THE LEADERS WERE REACTIONARY AND DISCREDITED CHIEFS WHO HE SAID WERE CONFIDENTIAL

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PROBABLY STILL IN SMITH'S PAY. THE GROUP HAD NO SUPPORT IN RHODESIA. FURTHERMORE, HE SAID, THE FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS WOULD NOT PERMIT THE GROUP TO BE REPRESENTED AT GENEVA.

4. FINALLY, CHONA URGED THE US TO PRESS VORSTER AND SMITH TO ACCEPT THE BRITISH PROPOSAL. EDMONDSON MADE CLEAR IT WAS EQUALLY IMPORTANT FOR THE INDEPENDENT AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS TO COUNSEL MODERATION ON THE NATIONALISTS' DEMANDS FOR THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE. IT WOULD BE SHORTSIGHTED TO BRING DOWN THE HOUSE WHICH WAS BEING SO CAREFULLY CONSTRUCTED AND WHICH THEY WOULD INHERIT VERY SOON JUST TO GET POWER A FEW MONTHS EARLIER.

5. DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS PRETORIA FOR EDMONDSON.

LOW

UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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NNN

Message Attributes

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